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July 13, 1959

MEMORANDUM OF CONFERENCE WITH THE PRESIDENT
July 9, 1959

Others present: Secretary Herter
General Goodpaster

Mr. Herter came in to see the President to discuss with him his outlook toward the negotiations resuming in Geneva on July 13th. He said he proposed to probe the Soviets immediately on one item as to which they have shown some sensitivity.

The President said that it must be clear that our rights stand until we adopt some more acceptable arrangements.

Mr. Herter

said that State is now thinking that a summit meeting on honorable terms is desirable.

The President referred to a phone call he had made to Mr. Herter. He said what he is thinking of is suggesting to Khrushchev that he visit the Russian exhibit in New York and spend a day or two here in Washington. The President would then visit the U. S. exhibit

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in Moscow and have a day or two's talk with Khrushchev. Really what he would have in mind saying is that we would like to negotiate improved arrangements and relationships but we could not ever do so with a gun pointed at our head. He would recall that the United States and the USSR had won the war together and had jointly taken on obligations thereafter. Under our obligations, we cannot and will not abandon two million West Berliners or the West Germans.

Mr. Herter said he saw reason for such a course of action. Although the public around the world does not seem much concerned, it is evident that in the "chanceries" a feeling of tension and uneasiness is arising. A conversation between the President and Khrushchev would do no harm and might do some good. The key point is to find a way of doing it without appearing to be kowtowing or weakening. Timing will have to be very carefully studied.

Mr. Herter next referred to the nuclear test talks. These are at a difficult point. The Soviets are insisting upon the acceptance of the principle of quota, leaving the exact number to be haggled over as a political question. It is clear, and becoming clearer, that inspection against underground tests is a very uncertain and expensive operation. Mr. McCone and many others would much rather start with a ban of atmospheric tests only. He added that the inspection systems being discussed would be very costly and of doubtful efficacy. Within the State Department there is division of opinion regarding the continuation of the talks. He thought there was a consensus, however, that they should not be broken off. We then come to the question, "how long should they be allowed to drag on?"

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The President reverted to the question of a talk with Khrushchev. He indicated he was prepared to say he was ready to negotiate on any subject, but had to make it very clear that we would not let down our friends. He commented that the creation of the feeling that these issues can only be decided at summit meetings plays into the Soviet hands, since they can exploit the flexibility available to a dictator.

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Mr. Herter said he would be leaving on Saturday, and would of course stay in very close touch with the President. The President said he thought there had been complete success between himself and Mr. Herter in exchanging views during the earlier session so that each knew the thinking of the other. He said he tries to avoid holding press conferences at times when they could embarrass Mr. Herter's negotiation. In addition, he strives to make clear that Mr. Herter has real authority to negotiate.

With regard to the summit meeting, Mr. Herter said there are two related questions to be considered. One is the timing of the possible visit with Khrushchev. The second is a meeting of the President with de Gaulle. Regarding the latter, diplomatic channels have just been exhausted in doing anything constructive.

The President said that the itinerary he was thinking of would be Paris (where he could see de Gaulle), Moscow, Karachi, New Delhi, perhaps Japan, and then home. Mr. Herter said he understood that Khrushchev would be invited here on an informal basis. The President confirmed this, stating that the meeting would be without agenda and without communique, unless they happened to come to some agreement. Mr. Herter said there is a feeling world-wide that no one in the world other than President Eisenhower would have so much influence on the situation, and this would seem to be an effective plan to bring that influence to bear.



The President said he would like to see some study as to the sequence of events. Mr. Herter said that the British are very anxious to have the summit meeting before the election -- which seems to mean late August or early September for the summit meeting. He doesn't fully understand this, since it would seem that a promise of holding a summit meeting shortly after the election might in fact be much better than one which turned out to be inconclusive. The President said he could go to Moscow about the first of August, and then to the summit about the first of September. He would be in Moscow about a week after the Vice President under this plan. In any case, the President said Khrushchev could be told that if he were to come over here for two or three days, the President would return the visit some time later in the year. Mr. Herter said there might be a good possibility of having the summit meeting in Quebec, with

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Khrushchev coming to the United States a day or two in advance. The President asked Mr. Herter to think about the matter and visit him in the Mansion late in the afternoon on Friday if he came up with any ideas.

A. J. Goodpaster
Brigadier General, USA



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